

II. Acknowledgement of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claims 7-9, 11, 12, 14, and 15. Claims 7-9, 11, 12, 14, and 15 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Rejection

Claims 1-6, 10, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0227781 to Mochizuki. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Mochizuki reference is prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as of its earliest U.S. filing date of May 30, 2003. The Mochizuki reference does not constitute prior art because its earliest U.S. filing date is later than the filing date of Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-205416, which was filed July 15, 2002, of which Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119. To perfect the claim to priority based upon Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-205416, enclosed with this Response is a certified English Translation of the Priority Application. Applicants submit the pending claims are not anticipated by Mochizuki because the reference does not constitute prior art. Withdrawal of the claim rejections on these grounds is respectfully requested.

Based on the foregoing, the rejections of claims 1-6, 10, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) should be withdrawn, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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